

Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman Congressman Dave Hobson (OH-7)

MEDIA ADVISORY -- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE— Monday, December 5, 2005

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COLUMBUS, HARRISON TOWNSHIP, PICKAWAY COUNTY WORKING TOGETHER TO DEVELOP RICKENBACKER AREA AND TO ATTRACT JOBS TO CENTRAL OHIO

(COLUMBUS) -- Congressman David Hobson (OH-7), Mayor Michael B. Coleman of Columbus, Pickaway County Commissioner John Stevenson and Harrison Township Trustee Paul Welsh today joined with regional government and business leaders to announce an historic Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) agreement that could spur the creation of an estimated 69,000 new jobs and \$9 billion in new capital investment over the next 30 years for the area around Rickenbacker Airport.

"This is a historic regional economic development agreement for Central Ohio, and it is only possible through the cooperation of many partners, bringing together regional and Federal resources to invest in our shared future," said Mayor Coleman. "In the coming years, this investment will help attract new businesses and thousands of new jobs to the area, and solidify our position as a national hub for logistics and distribution."

"This JEDD agreement will provide us with an economic development plan for years to come that is fair to stakeholders in both Pickaway County and the City of Columbus. Imagine the possibilities for Central Ohio to establish itself as the Midwest distribution hub, and imagine how those possibilities will be enhanced with the signing of this agreement," Hobson said.

The leaders today endorsed an agreement to work together in developing northern Pickaway County with an Advanced Logistics Center. The agreement will be turned into legislation for joint approval, establishing specific plans for service delivery and significant public infrastructure investment. The plan will allow greater, strategic development based around the construction of the Intermodal facility by Norfolk Southern Railroad in Northern Pickaway County.

"This is a truly monumental day for Pickaway County as we look beyond our borders to engage in a development partnership that will have a positive impact for not only Pickaway County, but Central Ohio's economy for generations," said John Stevenson, President, Pickaway County Commissioner. "The JEDD will serve as a catalyst for Pickaway County, helping to erase many of the job losses we have experienced over the past five years."

“Harrison Township, along with the Villages of Ashville and South Bloomfield, our partners in the North Gate Alliance Cooperative Economic Development Agreement, are pleased that the extensive work we have put into developing the JEDD is finally coming to fruition,” said Paul Welsh, Harrison Township Trustee. “We look forward to working with Columbus in developing a world-class, advanced logistics park that will provide quality jobs for our constituents.”

The JEDD partners will work with the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, CompeteColumbus, the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, Circleville-Pickaway County CIC, Pickaway Chamber of Commerce, private business and educational institutions to develop a strategy to advance the development of the Advanced Logistics Initiative. This Initiative will be a master-planned complex; offering air, rail and truck transportation; workforce training; and education and research facilities to develop the latest innovations for logistics management, all in a strategic central-U.S. location.

The first phase of the Norfolk Southern Intermodal facility will bring investment of \$25 million and create up to 300 jobs. The new infrastructure will assist in the development of the Heartland Corridor Project, which will increase Norfolk Southern’s ability to handle double-stack trains from Norfolk to Columbus. Infrastructure work for the Intermodal will begin early next year with the facility operational by late 2006.

The Rickenbacker area currently encompasses 13 industrial parks, more than 100 companies and over 24-million square feet of development. Types of businesses at Rickenbacker include cargo airlines, freight forwarders, logistics companies, e-tailers, corporate aviation businesses, manufacturers and distributors.

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